

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KUALA 05480 160945Z

ACTION EA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8601

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 5480

LIMDIS

FOR ASST. SECY HOLBROOKE

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, UNGA, MY

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT

REF: (A) STATE 192498; (B) KUALA LUMPUR 5360; (C) KUALA LUMPUR 5230; (D) STATE 185263

1. WE ARE VERY PLEASED TO LEARN PER REFTTEL A THAT EFFORTS ARE UNDERWAY TO TRY TO UPGRADE DATUK HUSSEIN ONN'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON. IDEA OF LUNCHEON HOSTED BY VICE PRESIDENT FOLLOWING PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT IS EXCELLENT, AND IS CERTAIN TO BE WELCOMED BY MALAYSIANS. MFA PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY SATHIAH TOLD US LATE YESTERDAY THAT THE MALAYSIANS WANT THE VISIT TO BE AS SUBSTANTIVE AS POSSIBLE, INCLUDING TO THE EXTENT FEASIBLE MEETINGS WITH SENIOR USG OFFICIALS AND KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS IN ADDITION TO PM'S CALL ON THE PRESIDENT. THEY ALSO HAD EXPLORED THE POSSIBILITY THAT DATUK HUSSEIN ONN COULD ADDRESS THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, BUT SINCE NONE OF THE MALAYSIAN EMBASSY STAFF ARE MEMBERS, SATHIAH SEEMED TO THINK THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE.

2. IN OUR JUDGMENT A LUNCHEON HOSTED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT WOULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD MEETING MALAYSIAN
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DESIRES, PARTICULARLY IF COMBINED WITH ANY FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE WE CAN PROVIDE IN ARRANGING CONTACTS WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AND, IF POSSIBLE, FOR DATUK HUSSEIN TO ADDRESS THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB (WE ASSUME STANDARD COURTESIES SUCH AS OFFERING BLAIR HOUSE TO THE PM AND HIS PARTY AND AIR TRANSPORT TO AND FROM WASHINGTON WHILE IN THE U.S. COULD BE EXTENDED). MFA HAS ALSO INQUIRED

INFORMALLY ABOUT THE "APPROPRIATENESS" OF A CALL BY THE PM ON SECRETARY VANCE, IMPLYING THAT THEY WOULD WELCOME AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DATUK HUSSEIN TO MEET WITH THE SECRETARY AT SOME POINT IN THE VISIT.

3. SINCE THE MALAYSIANS ARE CONCERNED WITH SEMANTICS AS WELL AS SUBSTANCE, WE WOULD HOPE THE VISIT COULD BE BILLED AS AN "OFFICIAL VISIT" OR AN "OFFICIAL VISIT TO WASHINGTON, D.C.", EVEN THOUGH THE PM IS NOT REPEAT NOT COMING TO THE U.S. AT THE EXPRESS INVITATION OF THE PRESIDENT. WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT THE MALAYSIANS RECALL THAT THEY WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY TO EXTEND OFFICIAL COURTESIES TO FORMER VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER WHEN HE VISITED HERE IN 1976, AND ARE HOPEFUL THAT WE WILL TREAT THIS VISIT SIMILARLY AS "OFFICIAL" RATHER THAN "PRIVATE."
MILLER

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